mented in 122 blood banks in the cities of Bombay, Madras and Delhi. In Calcutta, the testing would start in 29 blood banks shortly. Screening of blood donors has also started in 26 cities where ICMR has established testing centres. The testing facilities are being expanded in a phased manner.

(d) State Drugs Controllers exercise control on the functioning of blood banks under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.

(e) Facilities for testing the blood for HIV and other blood transmissible diseases are being expanded in a phased manner. The Rules under the Drugs & Cosmetics Act are being amended to provide that every licensee of a blood bank shall get sample of every blood unit tested for freedom from HIV antibodies.

Provision of better telex services

1562. SHRI PRITHIBI MAJHI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to provide better communications facilities, particularly telex services in the major cities; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The major cities like New Delhi, Madras, Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Ernakulam, Gauhati, Jaipur and Hyderabad have already been provided with electronic telex facilities. Calcutta and Bombay Telex networks are partially electronic and they will become fully electronic by the end of 89-90. Some more major cities like Patna, Chandigarh, Pune, Baroda, Lucknow, Kanpur, Varanasi and Gwalior are proposed to be converted into electronic telex net work by the end of 1990.

It is also proposed to convert the entire telex network in India into electronic network by the end of the Eighth Plan subject to the availability of the equipment.

Development of low cost housing technology

1563. SHRI PRITHIBI MAJHI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Glass and Ceramic Research Institute, Calcutta has developed a low cost housing technology; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) and (b) Central Glass & Ceramic Research Institute, Calcutta has developed a technology package for the production of low cost innovative components such as sanitary wares, unglazed flooring and facing tiles building blocks and roofing planks, utilising low grade plastic and semi-plastic clays, unconventional ceramic raw materials and other ingredients, as materials for low cost housing. The process know-how for manufacturing the above components have been demonstrated and training imparted to participants from many agencies sponsored by the Council for Advancement and People's Action in Rural Technology (CAPART). Two parties are producing different items demonstrated during the training programme.

Addition of more direct exchange lines in the country

1564. SHRI PRITHIBI MAJHI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to add some more direct exchange lines and long distance public telephones in the country particularly in Assam during the 8th Five Year Plan; and